

**Board of Trustees
Suffolk County Department of Parks
Recreation and Conservation**

Minutes of February 16, 2006 at Meadowedge, West Sayville

BOARD MEMBERS

Ray Corwin

Chairman, Member at Large

PRESENT:

Richard F. White, Jr.

Trustee, Town of East Hampton

John Fritz

Trustee, Town of Babylon

Gil Cardillo

Trustee, Town of Riverhead

Miles Borden

Trustee, Town of Smithtown

Alexander McKay

Trustee, Town of Huntington

Gregory Dawson

Trustee, Town of Islip

Gary Olsen

Trustee, Town of Brookhaven

Terrence pearsall

Member of the Board

ABSENT:

Aurelio Colina

Vice Chairman, Town of
Southampton

Jeanine Dillon

Member of the Board

Vacant

Trustee, Town of Southold

Vacant

Trustee, Town of Shelter Island

PARKS DEPARTMENT:

Ronald F. Foley

Commissioner

Tracey Belone

Deputy Commissioner

Colleen Hofmeister

Contracts Manager

Bill Sickles

Sr. Superintendent of Parks

Nick Gibbons

Sr. Environmental Analyst

Kelly Roper

Environmental Stewardship

Mary Simonsen

Secretary to the Commissioner

GUESTS:

Lauretta Fischer

Principal Environmental Analyst

Jennifer Kohn

Assistant County Attorney

Marion Cohn

Presiding Officer Lindsay's Office

Kimberly Shaw

DHS, Office of Ecology

Honorable John M.
Kennedy

Suffolk County Legislator

Janet Goltz

Member of the public

CORRECTIONS TO THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 16, 2006:

Page 2 – Under Mud Creek Watershed, first paragraph: change "Gallow" to "Gallo".

Page 3 – Under Sposato Property, third paragraph: delete the entire last sentence.

Page 3 – Under Master Lists, first sentence: change it to read "Tom Isles said the County Executive had requested the Planning Department to complete..."

Page 3 – Under Master Lists, second full sentence: Change "additions" to "addition" and "replace" to "replacement".

Page 3 – Last full paragraph: change "8" to "9" and after "covered" add "or proposed for acquisition".

Page 4 – Second to last full paragraph: Change the first sentence to read "Mr. Ratay said Legislator Cooper made the decision to propose the installation of a dog run in the park."

PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE:

Cacoperdo Property - The parcel is located along Champlin Creek in the Town of Islip, in the Islip Terrace area of East Islip. It contains a creek that flows south into the Great South Bay and has been identified for passive recreation, as have other parcels along this stream corridor. The parcel is proposed to be acquired under the old Drinking Water12-5-E program for Passive Recreation Use. It is a 0.65 acre lot directly adjacent to the stream corridor and is just south of the Southern State Parkway service road.

Chairman Corwin asked who owns the parcel to the immediate east, Ms. Fischer said that it is publicly owned.

With no further questions, the motion to approve the acquisition was made by Trustee Dawson, seconded by Trustee Fritz. Motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0-0.

At this time Chairman Corwin asked those in attendance to go around the table and introduce themselves for the benefit of new members or guests.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Capital Budget - Commissioner Foley distributed copies of the Capital Budget to the Trustees for their review and approval. It then will go to the County Executive's Budget Department, followed by a hearing before the County Executive's Budget staff and the Budget Review staff. This is not yet a public document.

The first summary page shows item by item, last year's adopted Capital Budget, what we are proposing in 2007 and goes out to future years. We have asked for \$6.5 million more than we received last year, which is reflective of many of the needs that have come before the Board and heard about in a number of other venues. A large increase is in line number 19, Fund 7173 for **construction of maintenance and operations facilities**. This is an ongoing program of replacing old derelict maintenance buildings throughout the Park system. It has already been done at Cedar Point, Indian Island and one is being completed at Timber Point. The next one will be either Southaven or Cathedral Pines. They run from \$1 to \$1.5 million each depending on what improvements are needed.

The other noticeable increase is line number 25, Fund 7510 for **Historic Restoration and Preservation**. Last year we received \$475,000, this year we are asking for \$2.77 million. That need exists because Historic properties come to the County in a variety of ways, sometimes intentionally or sometimes when there is an acquisition of land and an historic building is on the property. The budget document contains a detailed list of structures we intend to either stabilize

or restore on page 88. We are reflecting the need here and have done so in discussions with the County Executive's office, but that does not necessarily mean it will be approved in its entirety.

In previous years, the budget for historic properties has not been reflective of what is really necessary to deal with the magnitude of the problem. Historic buildings are very expensive to restore, stabilize and then maintain afterwards. We are in a severe catch-up mode, some of our historic buildings are falling apart, falling down or beyond repair and we will have to either tear them down or watch them fall down, depending on their historic designation. It's ironic that if a building is on the Historic Trust List in Suffolk County, it cannot be torn down, but we can watch it fall down, and that's happening in some instances. The Parks Department is responsible for 230 or so historic structures, probably less than half of those are in the Historic Trust.

But, he said, as many things as there are on the list, there are probably just as many that could or should be on the list. We had to use our best judgment to go through them and ask what we can save, stabilize and begin to restore. For example, **Meadow Croft** in Bayport looks nice at first glance, the house and garage look wonderful, but the building right behind the garage is one of those that is going to fall down. We have collectively decided it is worth saving because it is a contributing feature of the historic designation of that property.

The Greenhouse at West Sayville Golf Course has \$110,000 requested for 2007, but after a structural report, the estimate to restore it is \$450,000-\$650,000. At **Timber Point** a former Commissioner had \$1 million in the budget to restore the main clubhouse. But at this point, the estimate is \$2.2 million, not \$1 million. The first floor is completely functioning. On the second floor we need an elevator, which costs \$150,000. The dance floor needs to be propped up, the windows are all rotted and need to be replaced. There really isn't anything you can take out that isn't material to the future health of the building. We are trying to get enough money approved in 2007 to start construction this fall and in January appropriate the rest of the funds to finish it, if it is approved that way.

Trustee Cardillo asked about the \$0 amount in line 4 regarding the **Southaven Stables**. Commissioner Foley said there were funds already approved and appropriated in 2005 not reflected here. What you don't see here is funding that is already on the books and appropriated, this budget reflects funding going forward. We have a structural study nearly done.

Trustee McKay asked for clarification on page 28 regarding **West Neck Farm**, where under 2006 it says "\$50,000 Requested and \$800,000 Adopted". The Commissioner said that was a special initiative adopted by Legislator Cooper. It is budgeted, not yet appropriated. He said we also need to meet with the Town of Huntington as they have indicated they want to put \$600,000 towards the project.

Trustee Fritz asked if funds were allocated for the **Smith Point Fishing Pier**. Commissioner Foley said this also is already on the books. But, he said the Corps of Engineers has made us go back to square one on the permit process and resubmit an application and start all over again because, they said, it had been dormant for so long that they deactivated it. We have the Fish and Wildlife permit.

In regards to **reconstruction of spillways** indicated on page 36, Trustee McKay referred to recent problems at **Fuchs Pond** of the water backing up and flooding the road and asked if it had been surveyed. Nick Gibbons said he met with the Town and the Department of Public Works (DPW) and it was determined it needed replacement. He said all of the \$80,000 allocated for Brookside in 2006 may not be required, and potentially there could be some left over to use for Fuchs Pond, depending on whether the project description gives us that latitude. Commissioner Foley said it wasn't described as such to give us that latitude, but DPW has a fund for these

types of projects. If this project is small enough, we might be able to use it.

Legislator Kennedy asked if Brookside is a spillway or a culvert on Brookside Drive. Nick Gibbons said this is referring to Brookside County Park, Town of Islip.

Legislator Kennedy asked about **Raynor Beach County Park**. The renovation project has been spanning 3-plus years and asked if it is close to conclusion. The Commissioner replied that it should be completed in next three months. The amount in the budget would cover things not previously included in the original phase, such as the stairway down the hill. Legislator Kennedy wanted to point out that there is a sump construction project for the area at the corner of Lake Terrace where that stairway comes down, which will involve reconstruction on underground frameworks and street level grades. The Town of Brookhaven is the lead on this project.

7185 – Removal of Toxic and Hazardous Materials, Legislator Kennedy asked if this was a generic fund. Commissioner Foley said it is essentially generic. For example, when we go into historic buildings in particular and do things like replace heating systems or floors, we find asbestos. This fund covers things like asbestos, PCB's, CFC's, and other similar materials at unspecified properties as we encounter them. DPW has staff that can do some of this work and contracts out the rest.

Legislator Kennedy said some of his colleagues are interested in **prioritizing** the whole gamut of **historic properties**, and asked if this budget corresponds. Commissioner Foley said not at this time. The County Executive gave Parks \$50,000 in the Operating Budget this year to have DPW find someone to create a priority list. The funds in this budget reflect the sites that you can see falling apart and that need help, and added that the items in this budget would be in the top 10 or 20 of such a priority list. There are others we have to make value judgments on, which we have not done as of yet.

Third House - Trustee White asked if the \$200,000 indicated for 2006 is the total appropriation; the Commissioner said no, that was in addition to preexisting appropriations.

The Commissioner said they could hold off on voting on the approval of the budget until the Trustees have had time to look it over and ask more questions at the next meeting if necessary.

Chairman Corwin asked for the status on **Trap and Skeet**. Commissioner Foley said we had received one bidder who was approved by the Legislature. The County Attorney and his attorney are working on the details of the proposed contract. The vendor has hired an architect to look at the site and begin to draw up a plan and we will sit down with them to express our input into the plan before it is finalized. The Commissioner said he met with the South Yaphank Civic Association where many of the members live on or near Gerard Road and understands their concerns. We will go to whatever environmental review entities we have to, including the CEQ if the plan warrants it, and will go to the Pine Barrens Commission as a point of information so they will know what is planned. When we get that plan we will also present it to the Trustees.

Trustee Olsen said the RFP states the vendor is responsible for **noise abatement** at Trap and Skeet and asked if the \$300,000 in the budget is in addition to the vendor's responsibility. The Commissioner said yes, it will be a combination of funds. Part of this plan is going to contain his investment and ours divided into costs that are appropriate for the County to bear and for the vendor to bear. He said he doesn't think a wall would be a consideration because it would cost approximately \$1 million; we will have to look at other noise mitigation options. That is all to be ironed out in the contract. We have started renovation of the building and the clean up of clay pigeons and some other things that will have to be done before anything is done with the property.

Legislator Kennedy asked if the **location of the range** would be next to riding stables, and the horse area still going to be operated and maintained. Commissioner Foley said it is the intention to open both facilities where they were previously located as they had coexisted for decades.

The Legislator also asked to what extent the department has looked into the buildup of **lead and any environmental effects** associated with it. The Commissioner said that two environmental studies have been done to examine existing conditions and what needs to be done. It is recommended that lead reclamation be done every five years. Lead reclamation was done in 1994, at which time there was a lower than normal amount of lead found, and then the range was shut down in 2001. We will require the vendor to do a lead reclamation within the first five years of his contract and then every five years after. Legislator Kennedy asked if since the last reclamation was done in 1994, to what extent has lead had an effect on surface run-off or groundwater impact. The Commissioner said the two studies analyzed the effect on surface water and groundwater and found that there wasn't any impact. The penetration of lead into the soil in most areas was four inches and six at the maximum. There was one spot where the penetration was deeper than six inches where there must have been a hole dug, but no evidence of contamination beyond that level. According to these studies, which were done around 2002, there has been no further penetration. Legislator Kennedy said he would like to see those reports, the Commissioner said he would provide copies.

Trustee Cardillo asked if full lead shots were still used. The Commissioner said yes, but different from many shooting ranges, there is no firing over open water here, which creates much less of a problem with contamination.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Corwin said he had attended the **Parks Committee** meeting on February 1st, along with Trustee White, Trustee Borden and Trustee Fritz. They had a 20-25 minute discussion on what the Trustees are and do, as well as some of the topics they have focused on over the last few years and their role in land acquisitions, long-term park planning, fees and discounts, public access, approving or recommending projects. A brief discussion ensued regarding the myriad of discounts that are given for various people based on age, occupation, volunteerism, etc., and that it would be nice if there was a more uniform policy about how to interpret that in the future.

He said they discussed the **Park Police Study** previously done by the Trustees to analyze the history of the Park Police and make recommendations on the status of the Park Police, a number of which were implemented through the County Executive and Legislature at the time. The Chairman said he felt it shone a spotlight on the need for Park Police to be paid well, well staffed, responsive, etc.

They discussed the **Alternative Parks Funding Committee** effort that took place about two years ago, which died for a number of reasons. It was a committee that existed for about a year and then there was a massive change in the members of public office and for one reason or another, various members of the committee went on to other positions and the interest in the committee faded. A number of members from the Parks Committee asked if we could provide materials and brief them on where things stood at the time the committee ended. Chairman Corwin said he would get them copies.

They discussed the **intergovernmental** work between the Trustees and the various offices that attend the Trustee meetings (Planning, Real Estate, County Attorney's Office, the Legislature and County Executive's Office, etc) and also efforts to be in touch with sister agencies such as New York State Parks and Long Island Regional State Parks.

Trustee Borden said Chairman Corwin did a commendable job in his presentation and the experience was very helpful to him as a new Trustee. Trustee White said the Chairman's point that while there are many land acquisitions, the fact that there is not always the money to manage the properties was much better understood. Chairman Corwin said this is a long term issue, stewardship is a difficult thing to handle financially. Trustee Fritz said one Legislator brought up the idea that you would forego an acquisition to maintain the ones we already have, which is not a good idea. The Chairman said the possibility was discussed of considering an incremental addition to every acquisition where a certain amount of money would go into a stewardship, management or endowment fund.

The Chairman said it was an open discussion on a range of issues and their relative roles were better understood. He said he planned to attend every Parks Committee meeting he is able to and encouraged other Trustees to do the same. The next two meetings of the Parks Committee are March 8th and March 29th at 11:00 in Hauppauge. In the last few years since they have asked the Presiding Officer and County Executive to send representatives as voting members of the Trustees he feels there is now greater interaction and communication between the Legislature, the County Executive and the Trustees.

Trustee Pearsall said if Parks could supply him with the e-mail addresses of the Trustees he would put them on the Parks Committee broadcast list for the agendas and the annual schedule.

Chairman Corwin also stated that he would like to schedule a joint meeting with State Parks, perhaps in the spring or fall, as he found them very useful.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:

Legislator Kennedy said thank you for the opportunity to attend.

Trustee Dawson asked about the **Land Acquisition** book discussed at the previous meeting. The Commissioner said we have asked for them, they have to be reprinted and once received they will be distributed.

Trustee Olsen, about the status of **Smoke Run Farm**. Laurretta Fischer said they are still in the process of negotiations.

Trustee White asked for an update on the **GATR** site. Commissioner Foley said the County Attorney is looking at the contract we've drafted, they have asked some questions and we should be able to deal with any issues that come up without having to go back to the community. Then it will go to the Montauk Fire District for review and then to CEQ (Council of Environmental Quality) who will make a SEQRA recommendation to the Legislature for a resolution. Trustee White asked if this could go to the CEQ now since they are not concerned with the legal aspects of the contract in order to expedite the process. Nick Gibbons said they don't need a completed contract before it goes to the CEQ, we can concurrently take it to the CEQ. Commissioner Foley said he thinks we can get it on the agenda, but said we need to make sure we have everything complete so we can answer any questions.

Trustee Fritz asked if the **stables** on the west side of **Timber Point** are on county parkland or state parkland. The Commissioner said it's right on the line, but the stable is no longer there, the new maintenance building is there. We took down the stable and had to use some state parkland, for which we had an easement from back in the 1920's, for an access road around the building, so it was right on the line.

Trustee Fritz said State Parks has been having a big problem with **cats**. He asked if there are there any problems with cat colonies in county parks. The Commissioner said there are no cat problems that he is aware of.

Trustee Cardillo asked for an update on the **erosion at Indian Island**. The Commissioner said we have received the DEC permit, we can backfill that area as a temporary means to protect the road. Bill Sickles said the purchase requisition for the material is in the budget office. The Commissioner added that at some point we will have to go to DPW to engineer a longer term solution for that spot.

Trustee Cardillo said a few years ago **maintenance buildings at Indian Island** on the water side were replaced and wanted to remark the old ones were unattractive and blocked the water view. The new ones were placed across the street and no longer block the water and the buildings are much more attractive. Commissioner Foley thanked him for the compliment and added that there is intention to do more cleanup and remediation around the site and Bill Sickles said the gas pumps and tanks have been removed. Trustee Cardillo said there had been a bit of furor over moving the tanks as it is a local road and people thought it was going to bring in a stream of vehicles. The Commissioner said they had taken that into consideration and felt there wasn't going to be an appreciable difference in traffic.

Trustee McKay said he got his new green key card and joked that he was "very disappointed" that it took about 40 seconds. He said it was a very efficient system. The Commissioner reminded everyone to get their new green key card and that there is no charge until June 1st for replacing an existing green key card (which will keep the current expiration date).

DATE AND LOCATION OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Thursday, March 16 at Meadowedge Country Club in West Sayville at 1:00 pm.

The motion to adjourn was made by Trustee McKay and seconded by Trustee Cardillo. Meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Simonsen.